Introduction of social science in schools

2822. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to introduce integrated and composite social science in schools, in place of Geography, History, Civics and Economics;

(b) if so, what are the salient features of the proposal; and

(c) by when, it would be introduced ?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a)Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) In the National Curriculum Framework for School Education 2000, NCERT has recommended for an integrated thematic approach for developing social science curriculum for classes VI to X. In place of four textbooks separately for History, Geography, Civics and Economics, only one textbook in social science will be prepared now. This will be introduced in a phased manner starting from April, 2002 session.

Rehabilitation plan for Vrindavan widows

2823. SHRI K.M. SAIFULLAH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have not taken any action on the Rehabilitation plan sent by the West Bengal Government on the status of Vrindavan widows; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor, along with the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) and (b) The Government of West Bengal had suggested the following : (i) provision of Old Age Pension Scheme to those widows of Vrindavan who do not wish to return to West Bengal; (ii) setting up of Old Age Homes; and (iii) setting up of a Trust with the representatives from the Central Government, Government of Uttar Pradesh, Government of West Bengal and local NGOs as Members and District Magistrate, Mathura as Chairman for looking after the welfare of marginalised women from West Bengal living in Vrindavan. They also informed that they would take up awareness generation in source districts of West Bengal.

Regarding the matter of pension, Government of Uttar Pradesh has informed that they are giving old age pension of Rs. 125/- p.m. to widows in Vrindavan area, including Bengali women.

In the matter of Old Age Homes, Government of Uttar Pradesh has taken on hire two buildings with a capacity to accommodate 250 widows each in Vrindavan. Certain Voluntary organisations are also running Old Age Homes for the marginalised women of Vrindavan. With regard to the suggestion made by Government of West Bengal to float a Trust, the Government had sent this suggestion to Government of Uttar Pradesh for comments/advice.

As for awareness generation, the Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) is implementing Awareness Generation Programme through the West Bengal State Social Welfare Advisory Board in 8 districts of West Bengal from where the widows have been migrating to Uttar Pradesh. Under this Programme, 102 Awareness Generation Camps have been sanctioned in the said 8 districts.

Courses in Visva Bharti, Shantiniketan

2824. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 4659, given in the Rajya Sabha on 27th April, 2001 and state:

(a) the names of members and the terms of reference of the Committee of Experts constituted by University Grants Commission in order to assess the deviations from the prescribed terms and conditions of approval of outside institutions/courses by Visva Bharti Shantiniketan;

(b) the report submitted by the Expert Committee; and

(c) the details of steps taken by Government to restrain AICTE from coming into conflict with Visva Bharti and other Central Universities?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) Details are given in the statement (See below).

(b) The Committee appointed by the UGC has submitted its report. The process has been initiated for examining the report in the Government.

(c) A *modus vivendi* between AICTE and the Visva Bharti is in the process of being evolved, keeping the interest of students in view.